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A SPECIAL SERVICE . . .

THE U. S. SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

For a long time folks have been asking us: "Just what is the SCS and what does it do?" That's the reason we finally decided to prepare this statement; not because we want to appear boastful but because this is your Service. You pay the taxes which support its program and you have a right to know how your money is being used.

In a number of important ways the SCS is different from all other agricultural agencies because it was designed to do a different kind of job. It is the branch of the U. S. Department of Agriculture which furnishes soil conservation districts and individual farmers the technical assistance they must have to apply an effective program of soil and water conservation on the land.

No two acres of land are identical as to the slope, kind of soil, and degree of erosion. That's why farmers can't order a farm conservation plan from a catalog. It must be designed to fit that particular piece of land, acre by acre, whether it's in crops, woods, or range, or used for wildlife.

For this reason the SCS has developed the only program in the entire Government which starts with a scientific analysis of the land. Then it helps the farmer adapt his operations

to fit the natural requirements of every acre by giving him on-the-farm assistance.

It is also the only agency of its kind which maintains its own special research stations to guide its operations. These work closely with state college experiment stations.

Soil erosion is a national problem which cannot be solved by any one farmer, community, or state. The SCS program enables all farmers, communities, and states to work together toward its solution.

The SCS program does more than conserve soil and water resources. It increases these resources by boosting productivity of the land. And it pays its own way by increasing farm income.

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The problems of agriculture are specialized, and the Congress has developed special agencies such as SCS to meet these problems. Because there are a number of different agencies in the same U. S. Department of Agriculture, the public sometimes grows confused. This is unfortunate because no program can succeed without public understanding and support. Therefore, to clarify its functions and thus speed up the national soil conservation program, the SCS here outlines a few of the important things other agencies of USDA are doing and some of its own major activities.

WHAT OTHER AGENCIES DO

- + Provide credit to farmers who need it.
- + Conduct educational programs for the benefit of farmers.
- + Bring electricity to rural areas.
- + Pay farmers part of the cost of liming, fertilizing, and other conservation practices.
- + Administer price-support programs.
- + Conduct research programs for the benefit of farmers.
- + Develop and disseminate marketing information.
- + Provide numerous other useful services to agriculture.

WHAT SCS DOES

Provides a highly qualified technical man who works personally on the land with each individual farmer requesting assistance.

- + The SCS selects its technicians carefully. Most of them were born on farms and are graduates of state agricultural colleges. They work under nonpolitical Civil Service appointments.
- The SCS gives them special training in its own training centers.
- + The SCS keeps its men currently informed on scientific discoveries arising from land and water research conducted by both state and federal agencies. They are also informed on new developments learned from practical field experience.

Produces a coordinated soil conservation program which solves the land and water problems peculiar to each farm, when properly applied.

- + The complete farm conservation plan is developed with technical assistance from the SCS but is controlled by the farmer himself.
- + It is designed for that particular farm.
- + It is not compulsory.
- + It boosts farm income an average of \$5 or more per acre annually.
- + The farmer pays no special charge for technical assistance.

Cooperates in a program organized and directed by the farmers themselves.

- + Farmers organize their own soil conservation districts under state laws; not federal laws. They elect their own local supervisors, usually neighboring farmers, to direct district affairs. This insures full local control. The Soil Conservation Service works almost exclusively through districts.
- + When these districts ask SCS for assistance, full-time technicians are assigned to the district at no extra local cost. Federal funds pay them and furnish their necessary supplies and equipment.
- + These technicians have no authority whatsoever over the district or the farmers in it. The SCS directs the work of its own men and develops their technical standards. But, it has no power of any sort over the farmers or their soil conservation district.

Works freely in cooperating with all other agencies, federal, state, or local. The SCS also cooperates with private interests, civic organizations, and all other groups having a stake in conservation of our natural resources.

PROVIDES A SCIENTIFIC AND SUCCESSFUL METHOD OF PROTECTING AMERICA'S LAND AGAINST DAMAGE WITHOUT LOSING THE TRADITIONAL FREEDOM OF OUR AMERICAN AGRICULTURE.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.